

USING PERSONAL BLOG AS LEARNING LOG IN PROJECT BASED LEARNING

Titis Agunging Tyas
turtle_torch@yahoo.com

Abstract: The change of the curriculum to curriculum 2013 (K13) requires English teachers to apply scientific approach in teaching and learning process. Many methods which suit to this approach are suggested. One of them is Project Based Learning (PBL). PBL will help English teachers to cover the challenge given by K13 in integrating the English skills. The problem that will happen during the application of PBL is in supervising the development of the project since the classes in Indonesian's schools are large. Each class consists of around 38 students. Giving project without giving supervision in its development can cause a problem at the time the project should be submitted. It results unfinished project and ends with giving the students lower scores. Therefore, in overcoming the problem of supervising many students in doing their projects, a personal blog can be a solution. Blog is personal webpage which can be updated frequently. It consists of several posts and the archives are usually in reverse-chronological order. Some sites provide blogs for free. The owner can post text, photos, videos or the combination of them. Since blog is an online media of communication, the teacher can supervise and control the project development anytime and anywhere easily. The other strength of utilizing this technology is the teacher can also reveal the students' discipline, responsibility, and spiritual value. The use of this personal blog as learning log in project based learning is supposed to help teachers by utilizing the technology to solve their teaching problems. Further research can be focused on implementing it as a strategy or conducting experiment on it.

Keywords: *Personal Blog, Learning log, Project Based Learning, K13*

Introduction

Curriculum 2013 (K13) has been launched and introduced to public by the Indonesian ministry of culture and education in 2013. Some schools were pointed to implement it as its pilot project. The changes or development of the curriculum is not a new issue since it had been developed several times before. We have to adjust our curriculum as the answer of the previous curriculum lack and the learning paradigms. The paradigm shifts into the learning which emphasizes on the importance of cooperation and collaboration in solving problems.

The changes of curriculum encompasses several elements include graduation standard, material, approach, teaching learning process, assessment and extracurricular. One of the essential differences is the use of scientific approach on its teaching and learning process and is implemented in all subjects.

Scientific approach emphasises on the use of scientific method in its teaching and learning process. It consists of several steps: observing, questioning, associating, experimenting, and networking. The teaching model which supports this approach are project based learning, problem based learning, and discovery learning. The writer chooses the project based learning since it is being implemented in several junior high schools where K13 is pilot projecting. Based on observation, it reveals that when the students had to present the project, they weren't ready. It results in delayed and interrupted teaching and learning process and minimum score of students' performance.

According to the problem the writer found, lack of supervision becomes the major cause. Therefore, the writer uses personal blog as the solution. Giarre and Jaccheri (2008) said that the experience with the use of blogs for specific educational purpose that they presented is also at a very starting point, but they encourage it. They believe in it as a further instrument to help the teaching and the exchange of feedback with students. It means that there is a possibility to use blog as educational tool.

Discussion

Project Based Learning (PBL)

Project-based learning' refers to students designing, planning, and carrying out an extended project that produces a publicly-exhibited output such as a product, publication, or presentation (Patton, 2012). It allows the teacher to teach English skills but gives the teacher and students freedom to choose the project.

Patton (2012) mentions several reasons why implementing PBL is important. PBL and the use of technology bring a new relevance to the learning at hand. PBL lends itself to authentic assessment, promotes lifelong learning, and accommodates students with varying learning styles and differences.

Several steps can be followed to implement PBL in class: (1) get the idea; (2) design the project; (3) tune the project; (4) do the project; and (5) exhibit the project.

Idea can come from anyone and anywhere so try to think or talk to colleagues. Designing the project means we have to decide what we want our students to learn then plan. Tune the project by presenting it to the colleagues and ask them to give feedback. Do the project refers to introducing and asking the students to do the project. At this point, the supervision is needed. The last one is exhibit the project. It means that celebrating of the project. It could be integrated with assessment.

Some projects can be conducted in English class. It can deal with the procedures, giving directions, description, etc.

Blog

A weblog or blog is a journal-like page (post) on a website. Besides written post, the owner can post photos, video or the combination of them. The postings are organized chronologically. Readers can comment on a weblog post so that it also facilitates a dialogue or feedback on the posting's topic (Hain & Back, 2008).

Some researcher had conducted research dealt with blog but usually they correlate it with writing skill. Zhang (2009) shows that blog is an effective tool for students to improve English writing. Mynard (2007) suggests that blog could be use as a tool for reflection for English language learners. In short, blog is potential for pedagogical application.

Blogs are free-provided in some sites for the members. It is also easy for students to operate it. Although it is easy but the teacher has to make sure that they can make and operate it because some of the students could be unfamiliar with weblog (blog). So, a training of making a blog is needed to be conducted before the students do the project.

The steps to make a blog are: (1) provide an email; (2) sign up a site which provides free blog (e. g. wordpress, blogspot, etc.); (3) fill in some forms; (4) start the account (blog). Since the project is for group, the teacher could ask the students to make a blog for each group.

Learning Log

Logs are containers for writing that is recorded over a period of time. The writing may accompany a programme of learning, work, fieldwork or placement experience or a research project (Moon, 2003).

A learning log in project based learning can help the students and the teacher to control and see the project progress. Since blog can also accommodate pictures and videos, so the learning log in PBL can be modified. Not only presenting the written report of the project progress but also showing the pictures or videos of the project. It could be how they discuss the project, they make it step by step, etc.

Procedures

The procedures in implementing the weblog as the learning log in project based learning are:

First, the teacher follows the steps of PBL above

Second, before the fourth step, the teacher must train the students to make and operate a blog.

Third, when the students start doing their project ask them to post anything from the progress of their project as their logs.

Fourth, visit the students' blogs to supervise it. Leave comment so that they know you have visited their blogs. You can communicate with them by this comment.

Conclusion

Personal blog is potential to be applied in education. It is applicable to be inserted in project based learning as the learning log. The online learning log could reveal some values that should be assessed based on K13. It could be responsibility, discipline, and so forth. Blog as the learning log can help the teacher to supervise and control the progress of the project. Although it is fruitful in solving the supervision problem but it also has some lacks. It is not applicable if the learning environment is not internet-supported environment.

Suggestion

Due to the lack of internet connection, the application in the area without internet connection is not recommended. The teacher must consider the students' abilities in terms of economy so that the students do not feel too hard to have blog as learning log. For further research, this concept can be experimented or used as a strategy.

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